

REMARKS

Applicant concurrently files herewith a Petition (and fee) for a One-Month Extension of Time.

Applicant concurrently files herewith an excess claim fee for (3) three independent claims.

Claims 1-11, 14-19, 22, and 24-25, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant has rewritten allowable claims 12, 13, 20, 21, 23, and 26 in independent form, placing these claims in form for immediate allowance.

Entry of this 1.116 Amendment is proper. Since the amendments above narrow the issues for appeal and since such features were in the claims earlier, such amendments do not raise a new issue requiring further searching and/or consideration by the Examiner. As such, entry of this Amendment is believed to be proper and is earnestly solicited.

It is noted that the amendments are made only to more particularly define the invention and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, for narrowing the scope of the claims, or for any reason related to a statutory requirement for patentability.

It is further noted that, notwithstanding any claim amendments made herein, Applicant's intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements, even if amended herein or later during prosecution.

FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 12, 13, 20, 21, 23, and 26, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: 8/25/03
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